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ABSTRACT

In a case study involving the St. Petersburg, Florida, "Times" and "Independent," two questions were asked: How is the newspaper ombudsman perceived by the other members of the staff, including both management and nonmanagement? and How do opinions about the ombudsman differ, if at all, between a newspaper staff which has an ombudsman and one which does not? Respondents for the study consisted of news staff and management who work in the St. Petersburg offices. Some of the findings were that: employees of a newspaper where there is an ombudsman are generally more supportive of the concept than employees of a newspaper where there is no ombudsman; employees on both newspapers were very close in describing the ideal ombudsman; longer term employees displayed greater company loyalty and greater support for the ombudsman concept; the role of the ombudsman gains in respect and support from staff members after the function is fulfilled and the ombudsman proves himself; management and nonmanagement employees agreed on the value and effectiveness of the ombudsman; and more women than men indicated that the access editor has greater importance to the newspaper's image, but they accorded him less authority than did the men. (RB)

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THE NEWSPAPER OMBUDSMAN

AS VIEWED BY THE REST OF THE STAFF

by

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and
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Paper prepared for the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, August 1973.

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Criticism and an apparent failing public confidence has been taken to heart by some of America's newspapers who are seeking solutions to the problems.[1] One recent method of dealing with the problem has been the appointment of an internal monitor or critic--an ombudsman--to the newspaper staff.

Patterned after the Swedish ombudsman, who is part of the national government, the newspaper ombudsman is regarded by those companies which have established the position as the public's voice in the news organization. The duties of the staff ombudsman generally are to handle reader complaints and suggestions and to help ensure fair reporting.

While several writers have encouraged the establishment of newspaper ombudsmen as a way of promoting press responsibility,[2] few formal inquiries have been made into the effects of the ombudsman on either the rest of the newspaper's staff or on the readers. This paper deals with the question: How is the newspaper ombudsman perceived by the other members of the staff, including both management and nonmanagement? Further, it was possible to probe this question: How do opinions about the ombudsman differ, if at all, between a newspaper staff which has an ombudsman and one which does not? These questions and others were dealt with in this case study involving the St. Petersburg, Fla., Times and Independent.

Background

Along with press councils, accuracy checks, "action-line" columns and similar devices, the newspaper ombudsman has been seen as a means of restoring credibility and encouraging responsible performance from reporters and editors.[3] In Sweden, where the first press council was established in 1916, a newspaper ombudsman--known formally as the Press Ombudsman of the General Public--was established in 1969.[4] Unlike the Swedish Parliamentary Ombudsman, who is a state official elected by Parliament, the Press Ombudsman is appointed at the initiative of several press organizations as a part of their self-corrective system.

In the United States the first newspaper company apparently to experiment with the ombudsman concept was the Louisville, Ky., Courier-Journal and Times. John Herchenroeder, formerly city editor of the Courier-Journal, was named ombudsman. His duties were to handle reader complaints and to ask the editors to place corrections in the newspaper when an error was detected. His work was mainly of an investigative nature as he did not publish a column or write general criticisms about the media.[5]

The Washington Post appointed a staff ombudsman shortly after Louisville. The Post ombudsman was given greater responsibilities and authority than was given in Louisville. At the Post, the ombudsman was expected to handle reader complaints, internally monitor what is published in the newspaper in search of errors and poor reporting and to write educational and critical columns about the media.[6]

The St. Petersburg Times and Independent established an ombudsman position in December 1970. It was patterned much after the ombudsman at the Post and was called "The People's Voice." Del Marth, formerly city

editor of the Independent, was selected for the post. His duties were to handle reader complaints and write columns of an informational and educational nature.[7]

At two of the first three newspapers to establish an ombudsman position, there have been problems. At the Louisville newspapers the only problem reported is that of some resistance in the part of staff members.[8] Robert H. Clark, executive editor of the Courier-Journal and Times, said an editor or staff member sometimes will resist the ombudsman's demands for corrections. He said there is no staff resentment, though.[9]

The Washington Post has had serious problems with the position of ombudsman. The company, now with its third person in the position, has had difficulty in defining the ombudsman's role.[10] The ombudsman was given wide authority to criticize his own newspaper and other area media. He also was expected to carefully read the newspaper daily and to report to the executive editor any errors he found as well as handle complaints from readers.

In St. Petersburg, the problems were of a slightly different nature. Marth left the company in the summer of 1972, apparently with no regrets on either side.[11] Eugene Patterson, editor of the Times and president of the company, said the ombudsman position had been given too much authority. Marth was allowed too much freedom in answering reader complaints and expressing his own opinions, he said.

When Marth left, Bill Brown, formerly city editor of the Times, was chosen to fill the post. The role was changed somewhat with the ombudsman being given supervisory responsibility over the letters to the editor column of the Times, the reader help column in the Independent and other

reader services. Also, the title was changed to "Public Access Editor" reflecting a change in purpose--that of giving readers access to and a voice at the newspaper, but eliminating the ombudsman's authority to write columns based on his opinions of the Times or the media.

Under the revised system, the Public Access Editor has no authority to make judgments or act on his own. When a complaint is received, Brown is required to seek out the facts from the reporters and editors involved and present them to Patterson who makes a final decision about what is to be done.

Also, the Public Access Editor gives Patterson a daily summary of complaints received plus suggestions or comments pertaining to the ombudsman's position. Patterson has the report posted on the bulletin board for the staff to read. In addition, Patterson reviews all columns by the ombudsman (usually two per week) before they are published. Patterson said he maintains tight control over activities of the Public Access Editor because staff morale suffers when employees have doubts about where the authority lies, or when employees believe their work is being second-guessed by an ombudsman.

Patterson, who was managing editor at the Post when that newspaper appointed its first ombudsman--Richard Harwood--described the situation there as a "complete disaster." The Post "had made the fatal error of giving the ombudsman public judgmental authority." The ombudsman's authority to pass judgment on fellow staff members and on his superiors created "chaos in the staff and the public didn't believe it anyway. They think you're crazy," Patterson said.[12]

While Patterson said he steered away from the term ombudsman at the Times because "it's a stupid title and an awkward word in English," Public

Access Editor and Ombudsman are used interchangeably for the purpose of this study.

The summer 1972 change to Public Access Editor at the Times also made official an earlier decision by Bob Stiff, editor of the Independent, that the ombudsman would not be involved with that newspaper. Stiff said he had been dissatisfied with the ombudsman role as it had been defined by Marth because the Independent had not received fair treatment. Another factor in not including the Independent in the Public Access Editor's duties when the position was modified, Stiff said, was that the newspaper normally has an insignificant number of complaints. The few complaints received were easily handled by the staff, Stiff said.[13]

The Independent is an afternoon daily newspaper with a strong local news orientation. Its circulation is about 30,000. The Times is the city's morning paper with a daily circulation of about 170,000. The Times is more standard in its coverage of news having heavy emphasis on state, national and international news.

Problem

Because a newspaper ombudsman is in the unusual position of dealing with complaints or criticisms of other staff members' work, this study concentrated on the effects of the ombudsman on the staff. The study was aimed at answering these questions:

Do newsmen employed by a newspaper with an ombudsman have different opinions concerning the value, need and usefulness of the ombudsman than employees of a newspaper which does not have an ombudsman?

On a newspaper with an ombudsman, are opinions concerning the ombudsman affected by:

Whether one is management or nonmanagement?

Whether one works primarily in the office, primarily with the public or a combination of the two?

The amount of professional newspaper experience?

The number of years a person has worked at the newspaper?

Whether the respondent has a journalism degree, other college degree or no college degree?

Sex of the respondent?

Race of the respondent?

Whether the respondent has had his work criticized or evaluated in the ombudsman's column?

Method

Respondents for the study consisted of news staff and management of the Times and Independent who work in the St. Petersburg offices. Those in bureaus were excluded because their contact with the ombudsman was slight.

The Times has a news staff of 98, while the Independent's staff numbers 40. An attempt was made to interview all of the staff members. Interviews were completed with 70 Times staff members and 36 Independent staff members.

Several instruments were used. One was a seven-point Likert-type[14] scale consisting of 40 statements. The scale ranged from very strongly disagree (with a value of 1) to very strongly agree (with a value of 7). The statements covered four construct categories concerning the ombudsman position: role, authority, value and usefulness, and loyalty. A fifth construct category concerned controls the company might exercise over the actions of employees.

Another instrument consisted of two pages of semantic differential

scales.[15] The first set of scales was placed before the Likert scale and contained 20 word pairs on what qualities the respondent believed the ideal Public Access Editor _should_ possess. The second set of scales followed the Likert scale section and asked respondents what qualities they believe the Public Access Editor, or "ombudsman," _actually_ possesses. The same 20 word pairs were used in a different random order in the second administration. The semantic differential covered three construct categories: potency, evaluative and ethical.

The demographic section asked respondents which newspaper they work for, whether management or nonmanagement, whether they work primarily in the office or with the public, years of newspaper experience, years with the company, education type and level, sex, race, and whether the respondent had had any of his work evaluated by the ombudsman, and if so, was the respondent satisfied.

The questionnaires were distributed to staff members through their supervisors. Whenever possible, the instruments were distributed and collected directly by the researcher. Because of the nature of a newspaper office, it was not possible to always distribute and collect directly. Interviews took place in 1972 during the week between Christmas and New Year.

Data analysis consisted of F tests and t tests with a level of significance of .05.[16] All tests were two-tailed.

Results

There were 106 usable responses, 70 (65.4 per cent) _Times_ staff members and 36 (33.6 per cent) _Independent_ staff members (Table 1). One respondent did not complete the demographic section of the instrument and could not be included in the analysis.

In the semantic differential scale rating the ideal ombudsman, significance between Times and Independent respondents occurred in only one word pair--Loud-Soft (Table 2). This difference would appear to be a result of nothing more than chance. Thus, indications are that the two staffs did agree considerably in perceptions of the ideal ombudsman.

In the semantic differential scale rating the actual ombudsman, Times and Independent responses were significantly different with the F test and t test at .05 for three word pairs, and a fourth word pair was significant at .05 for the t test but not the F test (Table 3). All of these significant responses were in the Evaluative construct category.

In each case where significance occurred, Times respondents believed the ombudsman to be more interesting, good, wise and valuable than did Independent respondents.

Results for four word pairs approached significance at .10. One of these pairs was in the Evaluative category, and the rest were in the Ethical category. The Times staffers regarded the ombudsman as more meaningful, responsible, truthful and unbiased than did the Independent staffers.

Further, in all but one of the other word pairs where less than significant differences occurred, the direction of responses appeared to be the same, that is, Times respondents indicated they believed the ombudsman to be more powerful, fair, accurate, etc. (Table 3). The only exception was that of Serious-Humorous where the Independent respondents indicated that the ombudsman was more "serious" than the Times respondents indicated.

Mean scores of Times and Independent newsmen on the 40-statement Likert scale showed significance on both the F test and t test at the .05 level in four cases and on the t test in two cases (Table 4). Times respondents agreed strongly that the access editor should have guaranteed space for

a regular column (6.04), while Independent respondents agreed somewhat (5.25). Times respondents were neutral on the access editor evaluating the performance of all area media (3.99), while Independent respondents disagreed somewhat (3.19). The statement that the access editor should be subject to dismissal just like any other staff member was agreed to somewhat by Times respondents (5.21), while it won strong agreement from Independent respondents (6.06). Times respondents strongly agreed that the ombudsman gives the newspaper a better public image (6.01), while Independent staffers agreed somewhat (5.44). Hiring the access editor on a contract that cannot be cancelled got slight disagreement from Times staffers (2.97), while it received strong disagreement from Independent respondents (2.22). Times respondents agreed somewhat that employees should be free to hold outside jobs (5.11),while Independent staffers agreed strongly (6.06).

There were four statements where the difference in means between Times and Independent newsmen approached significance at .10 (Numbers 11, 18, 25 and 34). The direction in these four statements followed the direction of the six previously cited statements: Times staffers expressed more confidence in and support for the staff ombudsman concept.

Now, attention may be turned to a more detailed analysis of how the Times respondents viewed the ombudsman. The semantic differential scales yielded few significant differences on the independent variables chosen for analysis. Most, in fact, would appear to have occurred by chance, and so these results are not presented. In the analysis of the 40 Likert statements using the demographic factors as independent variables, race was omitted since there was only one black respondent.

When management and nonmanagement staff members were considered, three

of the statements showed significance at .05 (see "Position," Table 5). Management respondents were neutral (4.0) to the statement that the ombudsman's first loyalty is to his employer, while nonmanagement respondents disagreed somewhat (2.84). Management respondents agreed strongly (5.94) that the Public Access Editor should report only to the president or another high company official, while nonmanagement respondents agreed somewhat (4.98). Management was neutral to the statement that employees should be free to have outside jobs (4.06), while nonmanagement respondents agreed somewhat (5.44).

It might be expected that management and nonmanagement employees of the Times would disagree more on the value and effectiveness of the ombudsman position. The lack of significance in the differences would seem to indicate that those who are most subject to the effects of having an ombudsman do not harbor resistance or resentment toward the position.

When comparing the responses of men and women, eight statements showed statistically significant differences (see "Sex," Table 5). Women, on the whole, indicated that the access editor has more importance to the newspaper's image than did the men (Numbers 22, 24 and 26). Women also indicated that they believed the access editor should have more company loyalty (Numbers 30 and 35), but they accorded him less authority than did the men respondents (Numbers 2, 5 and 7).

Among the Times respondents, 52.2 per cent (36) indicated their work had been evaluated and 47.8 per cent (33) said their work had not been evaluated by the ombudsman. Among those whose work had been evaluated, 81.3 per cent (26) said they were satisfied with the evaluation and 18.8 per cent (6) were not.

Those who had had work evaluated slightly disagreed (3.42) that the

ombudsman should evaluate the performance of all area media, while those who had not had work evaluated slightly agreed (4.61). There was slight agreement from those whose work had been evaluated that the access editor's column should not be edited except to check for errors (4.47), while those whose work had not been evaluated agreed more strongly (5.33). These responses seem to indicate a caution about giving the access editor too much of a free hand. But the high level of satisfaction by those who have been evaluated is reflected in their strong agreement (6.11) that having an access editor gives the readers more confidence in the newspaper. Those whose work had not been evaluated agreed somewhat (5.34).

Respondents who said they were not satisfied with the evaluation were asked to explain why. For the most part, the comments were mild. One respondent wrote: "Cited reader criticism of story in his column, even though the criticism was untrue and inaccurate, as the story had already explained what the reader specifically asked."

Another comment was: "The evaluation was correct as far as it went but did not give the complete reason for the mistake."

A mistake in a correction was the basis for another respondent's dissatisfaction. Two respondents emphasized that the access editor should check with the reporter before publishing critical letters "just to be sure he is 'fully cognizant of the magnitudes involved.'"

One respondent who had been involved with a story evaluated by the access editor was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied: "No opinion, really. Neither story nor the evaluation were of much impact."

A respondent who is part of the management staff wrote, "In some cases satisfied, in others not with the accuracy and fairness of the correction."

The length of time respondents had worked for the Times brought significant results in 10 statements. On the whole, the differences showed that those who have been employed at the Times the longest believe the ombudsman should have more authority (Numbers 2, 10 and 14), more company loyalty (Number 35), and is more valuable (Numbers 23, 25, 26 and 28) than those respondents at the newspaper for fewer years. As for company control of the employees' private activities, the longer term staffers generally agreed more strongly (6.58) than newer employees (5.07 and 5.31) that staff members should not conduct themselves in a manner that would reflect a bad image on the newspaper. Longer term employees disagreed slightly (3.83) that staff members should be free to have outside jobs, while shorter term staffers agreed somewhat (5.55 and 5.15).

In general, the longer term employees displayed greater company loyalty and tended to have greater support for the ombudsman concept. It might have been suspected that longer term employees would be more reluctant to embrace such a new concept at the newspaper where they have worked for so many years.

As to education, those without college degrees expressed stronger company loyalty (Numbers 29, 30 and 35) and more agreement on the value of the access editor (Numbers 26 and 28) than respondents with college degrees. Respondents without college degrees also agreed strongly (5.87) that staffers should be free to participate in political affairs, while those with degrees in fields other than journalism agreed somewhat (4.36) and those with journalism degrees were about neutral (3.92).

It would appear, then, that those without college degrees are willing to accept company policies, but journalism majors with degrees

are less willing except when other factors such as ideals are involved.

Respondents with the greatest newspaper experience tended to express stronger company loyalty (Numbers 36, 37 and 38) than less experienced newsmen. Other than that, there were no clear trends.

There were significant differences on four statements when comparing responses according to whether work was primarily in the office, with the public or in combination. Those who work both in the office and with the public agreed more strongly that the access editor should not publish evaluations if it could damage a reporter's effectiveness with sources (5.33) than those who work primarily with the public (3.85) or primarily in the office (3.67).

Those who work primarily in the office agreed somewhat (5.13) that the ombudsman should have access to confidential information, while those who work with the public disagreed slightly (3.85) and those who work a combination agreed slightly (4.56). Those who work with the public disagreed slightly (3.67) that the access editor should handle all reader services, while the other respondents agreed somewhat (4.87 and 4.67). Respondents who work in the office agreed somewhat (5.53) that having a public access editor increases fairness and accuracy of the newspaper, while those who work with the public agreed only slightly (4.15) and those whose work involves a combination agreed somewhat (4.78).

In this area there is no clear trend except that those who work with the public seem to indicate less confidence that the concept of public access editor has reached the public.

Discussion

The most significant finding in this study is that employees of a newspaper where there is an ombudsman are generally more supportive of

the concept than employees of a newspaper where there is no ombudsman.

The fact that employees of both newspapers were very close in describing the ideal ombudsman on the semantic differential scale indicates a similar perception of the concept. When the employees responded to the actual ombudsman's performance on the semantic scale, the fact that employees who have an ombudsman generally rated him as more wise, valuable and good than he was rated by those who do not have an ombudsman indicated that there is more comceptual distrust than actual distrust. It appears, from these results, that the role of ombudsman gains in respect and support from staff members after the function is fulfilled and the ombudsman proves himself. The distrust may simply be a reluctance to be criticized or to have one's mistakes publicly revealed. The actual practice could have the effect of soothing these fears if the ombudsman performs in a manner that enhances trust and confidence.

One surprising result of this study is that management and nonmanagement employees were in agreement to such a large degree. Generally, the disagreement between management and nonmanagement turned on loyalty with management expecting more company loyalty.

The differences between men and women could be a result of cultural conditioning. Since the women generally supported company loyalty more than men and the women accorded the access editor less authority than did the men, it might be concluded that a newspaper with an all female staff would have support for an ombudsman as long as the role is not too strong.

The high level of satisfaction with actions of the access editor among those who have been evaluated indicates that the Times has been successful in establishing a program that does not cause resentment among staff members. It is also indicative that the access editor is performing in a manner that

staff members believe to be responsible.

The results of this study give strong indication that the position of ombudsman is one that newspapers might create with internal success. While the study indicates there might be some initial resentment and resistance, it is likely that staff members would support the concept more once the ombudsman proves himself.

The best manner of measuring the effect of having an ombudsman would be to conduct a survey at a newspaper prior to establishment of the position. Follow up studies might reveal the extent of perceptual changes that might develop.

Also to be studied is the important area of public reaction and acceptance of a newspaper ombudsman--especially at a newspaper where the ombudsman publishes a regular column. In addition, it would be important to study other newspapers which have ombudsman positions. Staff reaction in St. Petersburg could be caused, to some degree, by local factors such as personality of the ombudsman or the newspaper's policies.

With this study it was fortunate that only the Times has an access editor. This situation allowed the comparison between the two newspapers staffs. It is important to note that Independent staff members, while not directly affected by the Public Access Editor, are aware of the position because both newspaper staff members work in the same building, on the same floor, and a number of friendships exist between the two staffs. Also, it can be assumed that members of the Independent staff would read, at least occasionally, the access editor's column.

Footnotes

1 A.H. Raskin, "What's Wrong With American Newspapers," New York Times Magazine, June 11, 1967, p. 28; Norman E. Isaacs, "The Credibility Gap and the Ombudsman," ASNE Bulletin, February 1969; Paul Trescott, "How Polls Can Help Newspapers," Public Opinion Quarterly, 13: 17-22 (January 1949); William L. Rivers, William B. Blankenburg, Kenneth Starck, Earl Reeves, Backtalk: Press Councils in America (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1972); "Critics in the House," Columbia Journalism Review, Vol. 11, No. 4, 1972, pp. 6-7; J. Anthony Lukas, "The Limits of Self-Criticism," (More) A Journalism Review, September 1972, p. 3.

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5 Robert H. Clark (personal communication).

6 Eugene Patterson (personal communication); Ben H. Bagdikian, "Bagdikian's Post Mortem: Keep Up Criticism," ASNE Bulletin (October 1972); Columbia Journalism Review, op. cit.

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9 Clark, op. cit.

10 Columbia Journalism Review, op. cit.; Bagdikian, op. cit.

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13 Robert Stiff (personal communication).

14 Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), pp. 479-502.

15 Charles Osgood, G.J. Suci and P.H. Tannenbaum, The Measurement of Meaning (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957); and Kerlinger, op. cit., pp. 564-580.

16 Hubert M. Blalock, Social Statistics (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960) pp. 170-176.

TABLE 1

Percentage of Times and Independent Respondents According to Selected Demographic Characteristics

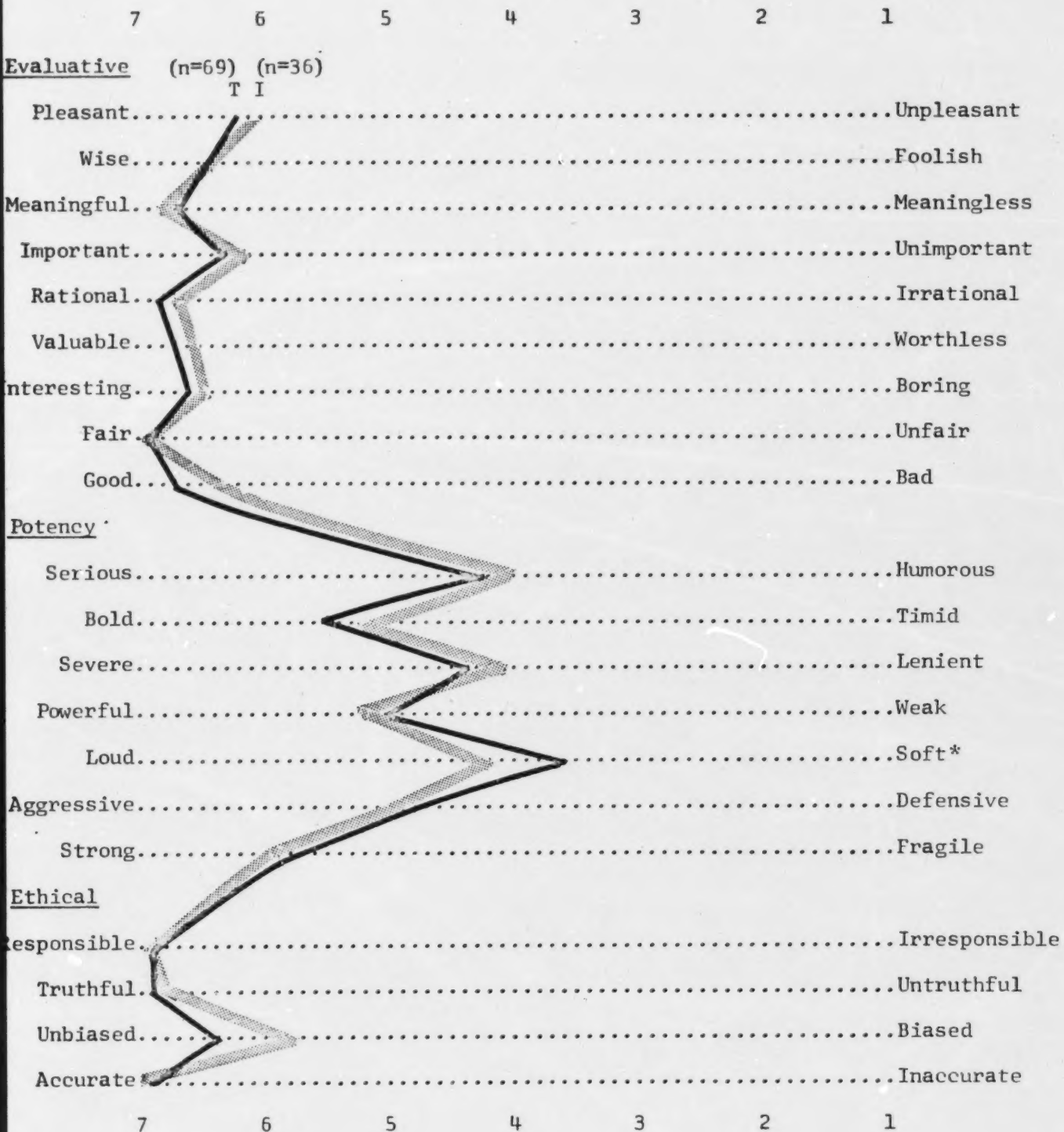
Characteristic	Per Cent
Place of Employment (N=106)[a]	
Times	65.4
Independent	33.6
Type of Position (N=104)	
Management	22.1
Nonmanagement	77.9
Primary Type of Work (N=106)	
In Office	61.3
With Public	26.4
Combination	12.3
Years of Experience (N=105)	
0- 3	21.9
4-10	41.9
11- +	36.2
Years with the Newspaper (N=106)	
0- 3	37.7
4-10	44.3
11- +	17.9
Education (N=106)	
Journalism Major	36.8
Other Major	40.6
No College Degree	22.6
Sex of Respondent (N=105)	
Male	68.6
Female	31.4
Race of Respondent (N=102)	
Black	1.0
White	99.0

[a]Ns vary slightly due to "no response" for some items.

TABLE 2

Semantic Scale Ratings of the Ideal "Ombudsman" by

Times and Independent Staffers

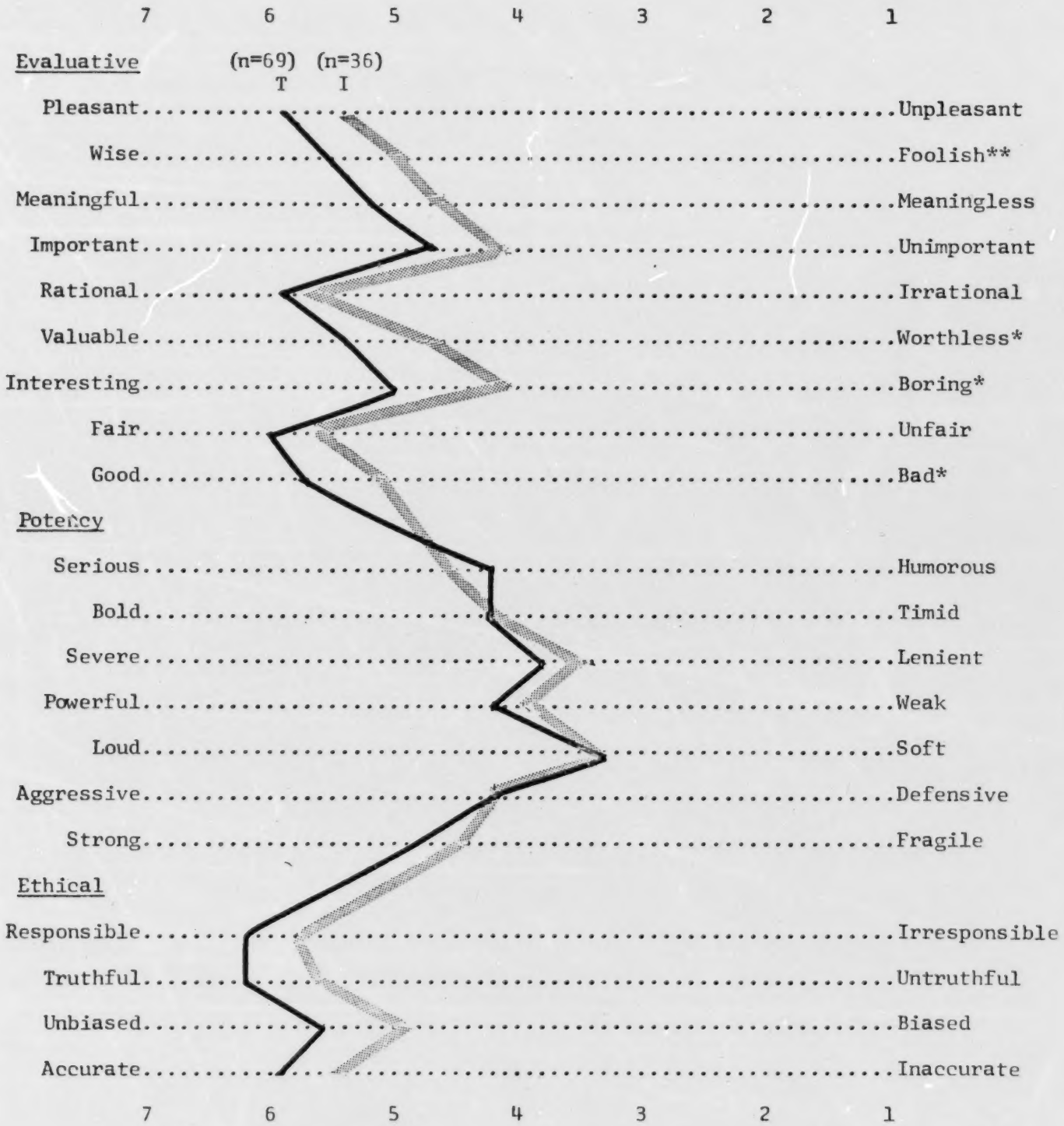


*F test and t test significant at .05 (two-tailed).

TABLE 3

Semantic Scale Ratings of the Actual "Ombudsman" by

Times and Independent Staffers



*F test and t test significant at .05 (two-tailed).
**F test not significant; t test significant at .05 (two-tailed).

TABLE 4

Mean Scores of 40 Statements by Times and Independent Newsmen[a]

Statement	Times (n=69)		Independent (n=36)
1. The access editor should have guaranteed space for a regular column.	6.04	**	5.25
2. The access editor should evaluate performance of all area media--including competing papers, radio and TV stations.	3.99	*	3.19
3. The public's editor should have free access to all departments of the paper.	6.44		6.00
4. The access editor should be concerned only with reader complaints.	2.60		3.09
5. The access editor should not publish results of a complaint investigation if it could damage a reporter's effectiveness with news sources.	3.99		4.03
6. The access editor should evaluate the performance of staff members in confidential memos to management.	2.02		1.89
7. The access editor should answer all reader complaints.	4.42		4.47
8. The access editor should be able to examine certain confidential information if he feels he needs that information.	4.80		4.97
9. The access editor should investigate and correct all errors he finds in the paper.	4.24		4.08
10. The access editor should be subject to dismissal just like any other staff member.	5.21	*	6.06
11. The access editor should handle all reader services including complaints and letters to the editor.	4.65		4.08
12. The Public Access Editor should give helpful advice before publication as well as evaluate after publication.	4.53		4.92

[a] 7=Very Strongly Agree; 1=Very Strongly Disagree.

*F test and t test significant at .05 (two-tailed).
**F test not significant; t test significant at .05 (two-tailed).

TABLE 4 (continued)

Statement	Times		Independent
13. A staff member being publicly criticized by the access editor should have a right to publish a reply.	5.80		5.67
14. The access editor should report only to the president or another high company official.	5.24		4.92
15. The access editor has too much influence on what management might think of a staff member.	3.42		3.69
16. The news staff should be allowed to accept or reject a nominee for Public Access Editor.	3.47		3.26
17. Selecting an access editor is strictly an executive decision.	4.14		4.57
18. The access editor's column should not be edited by anyone except to check for style, spelling and grammatical errors, and legal correctness.	4.84		4.19
19. The access editor should not comment on a staff decision unless it is clearly wrong.	4.24		4.00
20. The access editor should consider the feelings of staff members when writing his evaluations or criticisms.	4.16		4.42
21. The Public Access Editor gives the paper a better public image.	6.01	*	5.44
22. The access editor helps the public understand the role and function of the newspaper.	6.16		5.92
23. All newspapers should have an ombudsman.	5.99		5.74
24. The access editor gives readers more confidence in the newspaper.	5.74		5.58
25. Having an access editor has been valuable to this newspaper.	5.64		5.25
26. Fairness and accuracy are increased by having a Public Access Editor.	5.19		5.49
27. The access editor is the best way to give the public influence at the paper.	4.91		4.56
28. Staff members make fewer mistakes because there is a Public Access Editor.	3.74		3.36

TABLE 4 (continued)

Statement	Times		Independent
29. The Public Access Editor should not publish anything that might embarrass the newspaper.	1.84		1.89
30. The first loyalty of the access editor should be to his employer.	3.16		3.69
31. The access editor should be hired on a contract that cannot be cancelled.	2.97	*	2.22
32. If answering a reader's complaint involves company secrets, the access editor should not reply.	3.93		3.83
33. The access editor should perform as though he is hired and paid by the public.	5.00		5.28
34. The company's board of directors should have no direct control over what the Public Access Editor writes or says.	5.09		4.44
35. The access editor should always support his company's policies.	3.00		3.11
36. Management should allow staff members to be active in community affairs, even if controversial.	4.17		4.80
37. A staff member should be free to have outside employment as long as it does not interfere with his job.	5.11	**	6.06
38. Even when off duty, staff members should not conduct themselves in a manner that would reflect a bad image on the paper.	5.44		5.47
39. Any staff member should be free to publicly evaluate the policy or actions of the paper without fear of reprisals from management.	4.90		4.97
40. Staff members should be free to participate in political affairs as long as it does not interfere with their jobs.	4.51		5.14

TABLE 5

Mean Scores of Statements Scored Significantly Different by the Times Newsmen According to Selected Characteristics[a]

Sex:

Statement No.	Male (n=49)	Female (n=20)
2**	4.51	2.85
5**	3.67	4.65
7**	4.06	5.20
22*	6.00	6.60
24*	5.56	6.15
26*	4.88	5.95
30**	2.82	4.16
35**	2.61	4.00

Position:

Statement No.	Management (n=17)	Nonmanagement (n=52)
14**	5.94	4.98
30**	4.00	2.84
37**	4.06	5.44

Work Evaluated by "Ombudsman"?

Statement No.	Yes (n=36)	No (n=33)
2**	3.42	4.61
18**	4.47	5.33
24*	6.11	5.34

Years with the Newspaper:

Statement No.	0-3 (n=29)	4-10 (n=26)	11-+ (n=12)
2***	5.00	3.69	2.33
10***	4.90	4.92	6.33

[a]Numbers of statements correspond to numbers of statements in Table 4. (7=agree very strongly; 1=disagree very strongly)

*F test and t test significant at .05 (two-tailed).

**F test n.s. and t test significant at .05 (two-tailed).

***F test significant at .05.

Years with the Newspaper (cont'd):

Statement No.	0-3	4-10	11-+
14***	4.62	5.42	6.08
23***	5.90	5.73	6.58
25***	5.28	5.62	6.50
26***	4.97	5.00	6.00
28***	2.48	3.46	3.42
35***	3.38	3.96	4.42
37***	5.55	5.15	3.83
38***	5.07	5.31	6.58

Education:

Statement No.	J-Major (n=26)	Other Major (n=26)	No College Degree (n=15)
9***	4.35	3.69	5.07
18***	4.39	5.42	5.13
26***	5.15	4.77	5.87
28***	3.58	3.62	4.47
29***	1.23	2.00	2.80
30***	2.72	2.77	4.40
35***	2.46	3.00	4.07
40***	3.92	4.36	5.87

Years of Newspaper Experience:

Statement No.	0-3 (n=17)	4-10 (n=24)	11-+ (n=26)
2***	4.88	4.33	3.15
14***	4.12	5.63	5.50
17***	3.82	3.46	4.92
18***	4.53	5.54	4.69
36***	4.59	4.63	3.50
37***	5.77	5.21	4.54
38***	5.12	4.92	6.12

Type of Work Primarily:

Statement No.	In Office (n=45)	With Public (n=13)	Combination (n=9)
5***	3.67	3.85	5.33
8***	5.13	3.85	4.56
11***	4.87	3.67	4.67
26***	5.53	4.15	4.78